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The Importance of Pam

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY

BEULAH KING

Fitzgerald Publishing Corporation
SUCCESSOR TO
DICK & FITZGERALD

★COMMODORE, THE. 25 cents. A comedy in 3 acts, by ERASTUS OSGOOD. 6 males, 4 females, 2 interiors. Time, 2 hours. A very novel plot, worked out in an original manner involving the transfer of a large block of mining stock in which transaction the commodore assumes the role of a protecting genius. The dialogue is particularly bright, flows naturally and leads up to an unexpected climax, the suspense being sustained until final curtain. Amateur performances free. Professional acting rights upon application.

★MORE MONEY THAN BRAINS. 25 cents. A comedy in 2 acts, by PERCIVAL P. HALL. 7 male, 2 female characters, 1 interior. Time, about 50 minutes. *Pierre*, a struggling artist, short in money but "long" in debts is induced by his friend *Harry* to have his wealthy but "close" uncle informed of his sudden death; *Harry* hoping by this ruse to extract some funds from uncle. The funds were found but not where *Harry* expected. Introduces a typical street urchin; an Irish boarding-house landlady, a second hand clothier of the Hebrew type, etc.

★POOR DEAR UNCLE JAMES. 25 cents. A farce-comedy in 3 acts, by BEULAH KING. 3 male, 6 female characters, 1 interior. Time, 1½ hours. An exceedingly bright and breezy comedy showing what influence passed-away *Poor Dear Uncle James* had upon the marital fortunes of *Frances* and *Brice*. Introduces, among others, a girl of 15 and a youngster of 12. The dialogue is very bright and the action continuous. Highly recommended.

***BAD BEGINNING, A. 25 cents.** A comedy in 1 act, by ERNEST GRANT WHITE. 4 male, 2 female characters, 1 interior. Time, 1 hour. *Stephen*, a Nevada ranchman, comes to New York expecting to marry a society girl, but is "turned down cold." While preparing to return West immediately, his suite is entered by, *Ann*; he assumes her to be a thief and engages her in conversation while deciding what disposition to make of her, and becoming interested loses his heart on the rebound. How it results shows that frequently at least "A Bad Beginning makes a good ending." A particularly effective sketch, and not "over the heads of beginners," is highly recommended to amateurs of some experience.

★DR. UMPs. 25 cents. A farcical prescription in 1 dose, by ERASTUS OSGOOD. 2 male, 2 female characters, 1 interior. Time, about 40 minutes. *John* has become a fault-finding and irritable husband. In order to reform him, *Marjory*, his wife, by means of suggestion makes him believe he is near a nervous break-down. Under the assumed name of *Dr. Ump*, she calls in her school pal, *Mrs. Small*. The routine through which *Dr. Ump* puts *John* is screamingly funny, and is so successful in its results that *Marjory* is absolutely satisfied with her attempted reformation.

PHARAOH'S KNOB. 25 cents. A comedy in 1 act, by EDITH J. CRANE. 1 male, 12 females. Time 1 hour. *Lieut. Kingston*, in love with *Elizabeth Jones*, is repulsed by her mother, who does not approve of penniless soldiers. The *Lieutenant* finds an iridescent knob and is seen by a credulous bell-hop, and for fun he tells her a fake story as to its value. This story travels rapidly among the hotel guests and as soon as it reaches *Mrs. Jones*' ears, her antipathy to the officer disappears. Eventually it becomes known that the knob belongs to an antique cabinet, but before this discovery is made, the *Lieutenant* and *Elizabeth* have been married; so *Mrs. Jones* has to approve. Introduces a clever girl bell-hop and hotel clerk, a female *Sherlock Holmes* and her admirer, besides other hotel guests.

★WHOSE WIDOW? 25 cents. A comedy in 1 act, by HELEN C. CLIFFORD. 5 males, 4 females, 1 interior. Plays about 50 minutes. *Marcella*, a young Western girl, arrives at her aunt's wearing a widow's gown, much to everyone's surprise; this she did to gain more freedom. She assumes the name of *Mrs. Loney* and to her horror is soon made acquainted with persons of that name, presumably relatives of her alleged husband. The husband appears in the shape of an impostor and demands blackmail, but his plan is foiled, and after many comical incidents *Marcella* finds her match. The dialogue flows naturally and brightly, and the action is continuous. Recommended for schools.

★ALICE'S BLIGHTED PROFESSION. 25 cents. A sketch in 1 act, by HELEN C. CLIFFORD, for 6 or 8 girls, 1 interior. Time, about 50 minutes. *Alice*, a clientless young lawyer, seeking a stenographer, has several applicants, but none gives satisfaction. It eventually develops that all the applicants were disguised school friends of *Alice's* and adopted this method to induce her to give up the profession, which she does. Recommended for schools.

★HER VICTORY. 25 cents. A sketch in 1 act, by E. M. CRANE, for 17 female characters. Scene, interior of an artist's studio appropriately furnished, and arranged with such properties as are readily available. The number of characters may be cut; or several may double. Specialties, local hits, etc., may be introduced. An episode of a girl's colony in far-famed Greenwich Village of New York City, showing a bit of the trials and tribulations of a hard-working class of girls. Introduces an illustrator, a "Movie Queen," a darky mammy, a daughter of *Erin*, etc. Gives great scope for character portrayal.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PAM

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

By

BEULAH KING

Author of "The Paper Cavalier," "Poor Dear Uncle James," "His Sisters," etc.

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DICK & FITZGERALD
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The Importance of Pam

CHARACTERS

CHARLES SEDDON.....	<i>In financial difficulties</i>
RACHEL SEDDON	<i>His wife</i>
JANICE }	
GRACE }	<i>Their daughters</i>
PAM }	
MISS DENBY (<i>Aunt Aggie</i>).....	<i>Mrs. Seddon's sister</i>
HUGH DAVENPORT.....	<i>A wealthy suitor</i>
PAUL TRAVERS	<i>An artist</i>
COLONEL LUKE O'CONNOR.....	<i>Miss Denby's suitor</i>

TIME.—The present.

LOCALITY.—Any city.

TIME OF PLAYING.—One and one-half hours.

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS

CHARLES SEDDON, a man of about 60. Wears a dark business suit throughout.

MRS. SEDDON, about 55. Wears a very neat afternoon dress. ACT II, street costume. ACT III, silk dress; she also wears quite an amount of jewelry.

JANICE, a pretty, but vain, girl of about 22. Her manner is artificial, her talk affected. Wears a neat afternoon dress. ACT II, street costume.

GRACE, also a pretty girl of about 24, but with the same artificial manner as her sister. Wears a pretty dress in which there is a pocket containing her poem.

PAM, a pretty girl of 18, happy and unaffected. Wears a traveling suit in ACT I. ACT II, large percale

apron over a neat house dress. ACT III, afternoon dress.

MISS DENBY, about 45. Wears a neat afternoon dress. ACT II, street costume.

HUGH DAVENPORT, a wealthy young man of about 30. Wears street clothes.

PAUL TRAVERS, an artist of about 30. Wears a business suit.

COLONEL LUKE O'CONNOR, a jolly man of about 52. Wears business suit.

INCIDENTAL PROPERTIES

Landscape scene, familiarly known as a daub, for JANICE.

Bundle of poems in manuscript form for GRACE.

Cardboard box filled with odds and ends of material, telegram and a large lantern for PAM.

STAGE DIRECTIONS

As seen by a performer on the stage facing the audience, R. means right hand; L., left hand; D. C., door at center; D. R., door at right. UP, toward back of stage; DOWN, toward footlights.

The Importance of Pam

ACT I

SCENE.—*Living-room at the SEDDON'S. Time, afternoon of a winter's day. In the rear wall c., a door leading into the library. A door at r. leading into the front hall. In l. wall are windows overlooking the avenue. Curtains on windows. To r. and l. of d. c. are tip-back tables set with brass candlesticks. To r. of d. r., a grandfather's clock. DOWN stage r., a luxurious davenport facing the audience, and beside it a small gate-leg table with a low lamp. The chairs are Chippendales. Color scheme is red.* DISCOVERED MRS. SEDDON in chair by the reading-table; MR. SEDDON pacing the floor, and MISS DENBY on davenport.

MRS. SEDDON (*with some asperity*). My dear Charles, you cannot deny the remarkable talents of Janice and Grace.

MR. SEDDON (*very politely*). I'm not denying them, Rachel. I'm speaking of Pam's—er—rather nice way.

MRS. S. But Pam is so ordinary. She's a Seddon through and through. Now, take Janice, for instance. She's all the world like my people, isn't she, Aggie?

MISS DENBY. All the world.

MRS. S. The Denbys were all talented—every one. But Pam hasn't a spark of talent. As I said before, she's very ordinary except in looks.

MR. S. She has been called pretty, Rachel.

MISS D. (*with reproach*). Oh, Charles.

MR. S. (*stubbornly*). She has been called pretty.

MRS. S. (*driven to it*). Don't notice him, Aggie.

MR. S. And she has done well at school. I'm sorry, mighty sorry, she has to leave.

MRS. S. Of course you are, and so am I. But if you had taken my advice about a few things we should not now be reduced to a mere existence.

MR. S. There, there, Rachel, we won't go into that matter again. It's painful for Aggie, I'm sure.

MISS D. (*beginning to weep*). Oh, don't think of me.

MRS. S. (*with irritation*). For goodness' sake, Aggie, don't begin to sniffle. I know you miss your afternoon tea, but as I said before, if you want it badly enough to go out in the kitchen and make it, you are welcome to it. You can't expect one servant in a family of five to do everything and wait on you besides.

MISS D. I'm sure, Rachel, I think you're unkind. You know I don't want anyone to wait on me—ever.

MRS. S. (*impatiently*). Oh dear, if it weren't for the hopes I have in Janice and Grace, I believe I should give up altogether, but I have set my heart on seeing them make brilliant matches and have a career, and that alone keeps me up.

MR. S. That is quite enough, mother.

MRS. S. I haven't a doubt but Hugh Davenport will marry Grace before the year is out.

MR. S. (*really surprised*). What!

MRS. S. (*snappily*). Of course. Hasn't he been coming here twice a week for the last six months?

MR. S. I don't know as that signifies anything. The Colonel has been coming here to see Aggie twice a week for the past six years and nothing has developed.

MRS. S. (*reproachfully*). Charles! (*She looks toward AGGIE fearfully*). Then Paul Travers would be just the one for Janice. It would be a wonderful match.

MR. S. (*aghast*). Paul Travers? *The Paul Travers?*

MRS. S. Um, I guess you don't know it all.

MR. S. But he has never been here.

MRS. S. Perhaps not, but there are other places for them to meet.

MR. S. What do you mean?

MRS. S. Oh, you needn't be alarmed. Janice would never do anything that wasn't right. I was referring to the tea given at the clubhouse the other afternoon. He was there and so was she, and what is more, he didn't take his eyes off her the whole time. (*Waiting for that to sink in*) Then the other night at the Leslie's he was simply devoted to her the whole evening.

MR. S. (*with misgivings*). Has he ever seen any of her work?

MRS. S. I believe not.

MR. S. Ah!

MRS. S. (*scoring again*). From all appearances they weren't talking art.

MR. S. Heavens, mother. (*He chuckles*)

MRS. S. (*as if a stranger were present*). Yes, we depend wholly upon our two eldest daughters. By their talents and their brilliant matches —

MR. S. (*flippantly*). We shall be saved from wearing patches! (*Miss DENBY giggles and Mrs. SEDDON looks annoyed*) By the way, just when does Pam arrive?

MRS. S. At five, I believe. Some one ought to meet her. She'll have a suitcase.

MISS D. (*foolishly*). Poor child, let me.

MRS. S. Don't be ridiculous, Aggie. I suppose Grace could get Hugh to go down in his car for her.

MR. S. (*with finality*). I'm going to meet her. It isn't necessary for anyone else to go.

MRS. S. (*brightening at the thought*). But it would be so nice to have Hugh go.

MR. S. Yes, I admit it would look nieer to spin away in that roadster of his, but nevertheless, isn't it asking too much of him? He really isn't a member of the family yet, you know.

MRS. S. But he soon will be.

MR. S. I'm glad, Rachel, you are so optimistic about this thing. It's the first thing you were ever optimistic about.

MRS. S. I have faith in Grace's charms.

MR. S. Well, she ought to be attractive. She has had every advantage.

MRS. S. And after she marries Hugh, she will have more.

MR. S. (*reviewing*). She has had private tutors, been to boarding-school, college, studied abroad, taken post graduate courses, while Pam—poor child—

MRS. S. Charles, I don't think you need worry about Pam feeling bad over the lack of an education. She isn't that kind—distinctly she isn't that kind.

MR. S. No—thank heaven.

MRS. S. I should think you would be ashamed to talk as you do, Charles. Any other man would be proud of two such talented daughters.

MISS D. (*suddenly*). Yes, I'm sure the Colonel would.

MRS. S. Didn't you say yourself that you depended on them to rescue us from our poverty?

MR. S. I did, Rachel.

MRS. S. Didn't you tell Grace her first published book of poems ought to bring in thousands?

MR. S. I did, Rachel.

MISS D. And Janice's pictures! My dear Charles, you cannot deny that they are unusual.

MR. S. True, Aggie, they are unusual.

MISS D. And to be admired by such a painter as Paul Travers. Handsome, of excellent family and a genius! Ah!

MRS. S. It's time you were waked up, Charles. You are exasperating.

MR. S. (*with a twinkle*). I know, Rachel, you've had no use for me since I lost my money, but never mind, dear, we'll soon be rich again and basking in fame.

MISS D. Basking in fame. Ah.

MR. S. You, Aggie, will be serving tea to the great and famous, and Rachel here will have her hands full warding off the hero worshippers. Oh, I see it all and heaven speed the day.

MISS D. The Denbys are accustomed to fame.

MR. S. Oh, I know it. They thrive on it. I shall be,

the awkward one and lonely, too, unless Pam comes over to my side.

ENTER JANICE D. R., carrying a landscape scene, which she has just finished. It is what is familiarly known as a daub. Her manner is artificial, her talk affected.

MRS. S. Oh, here you are, dearie.

JANICE (holding forth her masterpiece). It's finished. (AUNT AGGIE RUNS toward her and MR. SEDDON surveys it from afar)

MRS. S. My dear, it is wonderful! Divine!

JANICE. I finished it this morning and I'll send it to Mr. Wright to-morrow.

MR. S. Do you think—that is, are you quite sure, my dear, he will accept it?

JANICE. Papa!

MISS D. My dear Charles!

MRS. S. Don't notice him. Your father never did have an eye for beauty.

MR. S. Rather fortunate for you, my dear, that I didn't. (AGGIE giggles)

MRS. S. That isn't funny, Aggie—not a bit. Janice, bring it here and let me examine it.

JANICE. Oh no, mother, you're not supposed to look at it close to.

MR. S. Of course not, mother, I could have told you that. The farther away from it the better.

JANICE (standing at the back of the room). I'll hold it up in this light. There. (She holds it for all to see)

MRS. S. (rising). Divine! I do hope Mr. Wright will give it a prominent place.

MR. S. But what if he refuses it? Just a supposition, my dear.

JANICE. Oh, papa, you're so stupid. He won't. He can't. It's too good. Why, I expect it to take the prize.

MR. S. What does Travers think of it?

JANICE (GOING DOWN stage). I haven't let him see it. He's solely a portrait painter.

MR. S. Oh, that *isn't* a portrait?

JANICE (*flapping on the davenport*). Papa!

MR. S. (*floundering*). I thought it was the head of a young girl.

JANICE (*wearily*). It's a rose garden.

MISS D. Of course, Charles, a rose garden.

MR. S. (*looking at the picture*). You don't say. What kind of roses?

JANICE (*thoroughly disgusted*). As if that mattered.

MR. S. I'm glad I know it's a rose garden. By Jove, if anyone had asked me at the exhibition —

JANICE. I think, papa, you had better stay home from the exhibition.

MRS. S. My dear child, never. (*Pacing back and forth*) It wouldn't look well, you know. He'll come with me, of course. But he needn't talk any.

MR. S. (*at the back of the davenport*). I'll endeavor to look intelligent for your sake, Rachel. (AGGIE *giggles*)

MRS. S. (*nervously*). Aggie, what is the matter with you? You are positively hysterical to-day.

JANICE. I want it to hang on the left-hand wall as you enter about in the center.

MRS. S. (*stopping in her peregrinations to close her eyes and visualize*). Left-hand wall—as you enter—about in the center—yes—um-um an excellent place.

JANICE. The light there is just right. (*Gazing at her picture*) I wish Monsieur Duval could see it.

MRS. S. (*going down to the davenport*). Ah, my love, he would think that his prophecy had come true. (*To CHARLES*) Monsieur Duval—if you remember—had great hopes of Janice.

MR. S. Duval was a sanguine sort.

JANICE. I wish I could go back to him for a term. (*Impatiently*) Oh, it's so degrading to be poor.

MRS. S. Isn't it?

JANICE. I wish I had already amassed my fortune and Grace had hers. We'd do the most marvelous things for you all. Aunt Aggie should have a diamond ,

teacup — (MR. SEDDON groans, but no one notices him. *Their heads are in the clouds*)

MISS D. There, there, my dear, I'm sure I wouldn't be so selfish as to expect a diamond teacup even if we were worth a million.

MR. S. Speaking of teacups—who is to get supper to-night? Flora's night out.

JANICE. Just like papa thinking of supper when we're talking art.

MR. S. My dear child, we've got to eat. If it hadn't been for a piece of bread Hamlet would never have been written. Besides your sister Pam's due for supper.

JANICE. Pam coming?

MRS. S. At five, dearie.

MR. S. (to JANICE). I think you ought to get her an excellent supper. She hasn't been home for six months, you know.

JANICE. Oh, bother, I was going over to the studio. (MRS. SEDDON looks significantly at MR. SEDDON) Mr. Travers has invited me to see a picture of his.

MRS. S. Certainly, my dear, go. Aggie and I will get supper.

JANICE (rising). Thank you, mother. You're always so thoughtful. What do you think of my asking Mr. Travers back for supper?

MRS. S. (hesitant). It would be rather awkward about clearing off the table and washing the dishes. You know Flora's off.

JANICE. Pam could do that. (MR. SEDDON turns and looks at her sharply) Well, no matter, I won't to-night.

MRS. S. Next week we'll have him, dearie. (EXIT JANICE D. R. with picture) A wonderful girl, and that picture! (More to herself) I'll have him over soon.

ENTER GRACE, D. R. *She runs straight to her mother and sits beside her on the davenport.*

GRACE. Mother, I've just had the divinest inspiration!

MR. S. Tell us, my dear, where did you get it?

MRS. S. Charles, isn't it time for you to be leaving?

MR. S. Sorry, Rachel, but I've twenty minutes yet.

(She closes her eyes and sighs)

GRACE. Who's coming, mother?

MR. S. Your dear sister, Pam.

GRACE. Pam? But I thought she was to spend the winter with Aunt Betsey.

MRS. S. She has decided we need her at home.

GRACE. Yes, I suppose we do. Janice and I have so little time for housework.—But you haven't heard what I have to tell you. It's about my poem—the last one that makes up the book. I am to send them all to the publisher to-morrow.

MR. S. Great things are to happen to-morrow.

GRACE (*taking a paper from the pocket of her smock*). Listen. I'll read it to you. (Mrs. SEDDON sits up, Miss DENBY bends forward eagerly and Mr. SEDDON stops short in his walk)

GRACE. I've called it The Green Petticoat —

(She reads)

I saw a petticoat—a green petticoat
It lay on the chair—crumpled!
The sun fell on it and showed it as it was—
 all crushed—
 In an emerald heap!
The shadows crept in, black and silent
 And made ridges—small sinuous ridges.
The high lights, the shadows and the mass
 of green!

MISS D. (*rolling her eyes*). Divine!

MRS. S. Grace, it's the best of them all. I'm so proud.

GRACE. I wrote it in less than an hour. I was sitting in my bedroom and my glance happened to fall on my green petticoat that I had left in the chair. The sun's rays struck it obliquely and it shimmered gloriously.

(MR. SEDDON *groans softly*) Then the inspiration came.

MR. S. Ah, my dear, you are not the first one to receive an inspiration from a petticoat.

MRS. S. Charles, you are not in sympathy.

MR. S. You wrong me, Rachel. I have always been in sympathy with a petticoat. (AGGIE giggles)

GRACE. Papa is so stupid.

MRS. S. (*exasperated beyond control*). Aggie, I think a cup of tea is absolutely necessary for the steadying of your nerves.

MISS D. (*rising and going to D. C.*). I'm afraid it is, Rachel. You'll excuse me. [EXIT

MRS. S. (*bitterly*). She's upset because the Colonel doesn't propose. That's what's the matter with her. Nothing else.

MR. S. (*to GRACE*). How much do you expect to get from your volume, Grace?

GRACE. The royalties ought to bring me thousands.

MR. S. Ah, she talks in thousands.

MRS. S. (*flinging her arms about her daughter*). My darling, my darling. You are really a Denby, a really truly Denby! We shall be rich again in spite of your father's foolishness.

GRACE. The family fortunes retrieved. We shall be living in luxury.

MR. S. But until that time—patience and Pam!

MRS. S. (*to GRACE*). How soon do you think you will hear from the publishers, dear?

GRACE. Oh, by next week. I am going to get them off to-day.

MR. S. Next week! Ah, and then we shall live again.

GRACE. Won't it be wonderful? Janice in the exhibition with a chancee for the prize.

MR. S. Prize? Is there a prize involved?

MRS. S. Charles, is it possible you don't know there is a twenty-five thousand dollar prize, after all we have said? Charles, you don't take things in.

MR. S. Strange, but you'd have thought I'd take that in. (*Bell rings*)

GRACE (*rising*). It's Hugh.

MRS. S. My dear, don't ask him to tea. It's Thursday night. [EXIT GRACE D. R.

MRS. S. (*with a smirk of satisfaction*). He's in love with Grace—there's not a doubt of it.

MR. S. Ah, that's good. I think, my dear, we had better bank our hopes on his fortune rather than on—er—Grace's poetry.

MRS. S. Charles, you are sordid.

MR. S. I have to be. I'm the anchor that holds the balloon you are all floating about in.

MRS. S. (*to herself with satisfaction*). Grace and Janice. Janice and Grace—

MR. S. And poor little Pam!

ENTER GRACE D. R., *followed by HUGH DAVENPORT*.

MR. S. (*heartily*). Ah, my boy, all ready for a game? (MRS. SEDDON rises simpering and offers her hand, which HUGH shakes)

GRACE (*very affected*). Now, papa, he didn't come for a game.

MR. S. I'm not so sure of that, eh, boy? However, I shall have to disappoint you. (*Looking at his watch*) I'm going to the train to meet my daughter.

HUGH. Your daughter? (MRS. SEDDON shows impatience)

MR. S. Um-um. Didn't know I had a third daughter, did you?

HUGH (*to GRACE*). You never mentioned her.

GRACE. No?

MR. S. Best of the lot.

MRS. S. (*rescating herself in the easy-chair*). Charles!

MR. S. (*to HUGH*). Well, I won't tell you what I think of her. I'll let you decide for yourself.

[EXIT D. C.

MRS. S. (*with evident relief*). Do sit down, Mr. Davenport.

HUGH (*sitting*). Thank you.

MRS. S. It's so good to see you.

HUGH. It's mighty nice of you to say so. I'd be desperately lonely if it weren't for your hospitality.

MRS. S. (*with a little too much emphasis*).[•] My dear boy, you're always welcome. (*She rises. He rises*) You'll excuse me, you two, I know.

GRACE. Of course, mother. (*EXIT MRS. SEDDON D. R. HUGH sits and GRACE perches on the arm of the davenport*)

HUGH. I had a great game at the club the other night with your father. Did he tell you?

GRACE. He never tells me anything.

HUGH. Really? He's a mighty genial sort.

GRACE. Papa is so ordinary.

HUGH. Eh?

GRACE. Papa is so ordinary. We have nothing in common, absolutely.

HUGH. That's a shame. A mighty good sort—your father.

GRACE (*dismissing the subject*). I suppose so.

HUGH. I liked him the moment I saw him. Genuine, and all that.

GRACE. Oh yes, I dare say. He's genuine all right. But he's not a kindred spirit at all.

HUGH (*puzzled*). A kindred spirit?

GRACE. That is—he doesn't like the things the rest of us like.

HUGH. But —

GRACE. He hasn't a bit of use for the arts. In fact papa makes fun of them, if you can imagine such ignorance.

HUGH. That's funny. He told me his favorite picture was Titian's "Man With a Glove." That's considered rather fine, isn't it?

GRACE (*her nose in the air*). Old style though.

HUGH (*humblly*). Really? I hadn't thought of it in that way.

GRACE. No, you wouldn't.

HUGH. So you rank me with your father.

GRACE. It's not your fault.

HUGH. Not my fault for being stupid, eh?

GRACE. I think I shall give you a course this winter.

HUGH. I'm awfully stupid. You don't know what you're undertaking. I'm stubborn, too, and hard to convince.

GRACE. I think I can convince you of lots of things.

HUGH. What for instance?

GRACE. Oh, well, how nice the new art is. (*Voices without in the hall*)

HUGH. Yes—go on.

GRACE. Oh bother, they're coming back.

HUGH. Who?

GRACE. The family.

HUGH. Your sister?

GRACE. No. Janice has gone to the studio.

HUGH. I meant your other sister, the one I just heard of to-day.

GRACE. Oh, Pam? No, it isn't time for her. Besides she wouldn't come in here if I were talking to you.

HUGH. You mean?

GRACE. She knows the conversation would be beyond her. Pam's ordinary, too.

HUGH. Like your father and me.

GRACE. Imagine it. She likes housework. She likes, actually likes, to cook and sew.

HUGH. It's well some of us do.

ENTER D. R. AUNT AGGIE, MRS. SEDDON and COLONEL O'CONNOR.

COLONEL (*heartily*). Hulloa, hulloa. Here's young Davenport again.

HUGH (*going to him*). Howdy, sir? (*They shake hands*)

COLONEL. Fine, and how do you find yourself?

HUGH. Fairly happy. Thanks to Mrs. Seddon, who allows me all the privileges of a family friend.

MRS. S. The dear boy just dotes on us, and I'm sure I'm delighted to have him.

COLONEL (*who loves to embarrass*). He surely dotes on *one* of you. (*Glancing at GRACE*) Ha-ha-ha!

MRS. S. (*simpering*). Oh, Colonel. (*All sit*)

MISS D. (*with the pent up wrong of six years*). I hope he realizes it and doesn't keep her waiting six years.

MRS. S. (*truly horrified*). Aggie.

COLONEL (*to HUGH*). Bide your time, young man.

MISS D. (*bitterly*). But don't bide it until all the romance has gone out of your life.

MRS. S. Hush, Aggie.

MISS D. I will, now that I've had my say. I've never had the opportunity before.

HUGH (*who has taken it all lightly*). I think I like the lady's advice better, sir.

COLONEL. I expected you would. Always side with the ladies, boy. It's both chivalrous and wise. (*HUGH goes to the window*)

MRS. S. (*foolishly*). Oh, Colonel, you have such a repertory of quaint thoughts.

COLONEL (*to HUGH*). Let's see, young man, you're one of those unfortunate individuals who have plenty of money. Tell us now, you surely aren't going to keep it. It isn't healthy for one man to have so much money.

HUGH (*with a twinkle*). I shall give it to my wife to do with what she likes.

MRS. S. There, isn't that lovely? He's going to give it to his wife.

COLONEL. Tut, his wife can't spend all that.

MRS. S. Oh, yes she can.

COLONEL. What? Her clothes could never eat up her income, even.

MRS. S. (*regarding GRACE*). Some girls have other uses for money besides clothes. Not all girls are frivolous.

COLONEL. Ah, that's true. I had forgotten Aggie.

MISS D. If you're being sarcastic, it's wasted here.

HUGH (*at the window*). Your father is coming and —

GRACE (*going over to the window*). Pam?

HUGH. I don't know whether it's Pam but a mighty nice looking girl's with him.

COLONEL. Pam? Pam coming? Little Pam. Good lord, I haven't seen the child since she wore kilties.

MISS D. (*spitefully*). Your own fault.

GRACE. Oh, I'm so glad she's come.

HUGH. You must be. She looks jolly.

GRACE. No more dish washing. A whole winter devoted to art.

MRS. S. And pleasure, I hope.

ENTER D. R. MR. SEDDON and PAM.

PAM (*running to her mother*). Mummy dear.

MRS. S. Home at last. (*She kisses her, but not heartily*)

PAM. And I'm so glad.

MR. S. She don't know how much her old daddy's missed her. (*PAM kisses GRACE and AUNT AGGIE and turns to the men shyly*)

GRACE. Miss Seddon—Mr. Davenport. (*PAM bows stiffly*) And Colonel O'Connor.

COLONEL (*who has been dazed by the sight of her*). Saints alive, the child's a beauty!

MISS D. Isn't that just like him!

MRS. S. (*to HUGH*). Pam's always been away from home more or less.

MR. S. But she isn't to be any more and I here give warning that no young upstart is to take her away from her dad. (*All laugh*)

HUGH. I say that's unfair.

COLONEL. Deucedly selfish of you, Charles, deucedly.

PAM (*laughing*). Dad isn't selfish. Besides, I want to stay with him.

MR. S. Um-um, now you can't but say I'm the luckiest man in the room.

GRACE. Seems to me there's an awful fuss made over Pam all of a sudden.

HUGH. I think, Colonel, we'd better be off. I'm sure Miss Pam wants to be rid of us.

GRACE. Oh, don't go.

HUGH (*to COLONEL*). Are you going my way?
(*With a twinkle*) If you are I'll lend you an arm.

COLONEL. Tut, young man. More like I'll lend you mine.

HUGH (*shaking hands with MRS. SEDDON*). I'm sure you want your family to yourself.

MRS. S. But you'll come again and soon?

HUGH. That's understood, as long as you'll have me.
(*Nods to others*)

COLONEL (*rising*). I don't see but what I've got to go with that young Jackanapes or else appear rude, but I don't want to go a bit. (*His eyes on PAM*) Never wanted to stay more in my life. Good-bye. (*He follows HUGH to D. R.*)

[EXIT COLONEL, HUGH and MR. SEDDON
PAM (*to the ensemble*). Isn't he wonderful—that Mr. Davenport.

MRS. S. He's quite devoted to your sister.

PAM. To Grace?

MRS. S. Yes, isn't it fine? My dear, he's worth millions.

MISS D. Think what that means to us.

PAM. I suppose we are quite poor. Dad says we've got to cut down awfully.

GRACE. Ugh, I'm so sick of this talk I won't listen to it. It's degrading. [EXIT D. C., *flaunting out*

ENTER MR. SEDDON D. R.

MRS. S. The poor child. She has such a highly organized nervous system.

MR. S. Um, a shame.

PAM. I'm sorry if I said anything I shouldn't have.

MR. S. You didn't, dear. That's what it is to be artistic.

PAM. I was just going to suggest that we discharge the cook. I don't mind the work and it would help out with the finances.

MISS D. Isn't that sweet of her, and I could wipe the dishes some days.

MR. S. No, my child, I won't have you imposed upon.

PAM. Listen, dad, I won't be imposed upon. I rather think I'll enjoy it—messing about and mixing dishes for you all. Anyway, by the time I get tired of it Janice and Grace will have made their fortunes and we'll be on Easy Street again. Don't you see?

MRS. S. Ah, yes, of course. Janice and Grace.

PAM. You will let me, won't you, dad?

MR. S. (*whimsically*). I'm afraid I shall have to, my dear. To tell the truth the cook hasn't been paid for four weeks.

PAM (*reproachfully*). Pa.

MRS. S. (*angrily*). Come, Aggie, this sort of talk is disgusting and quite unnecessary. (*Sweeps toward D. C., followed by AGGIE*)

[EXIT D. C. MRS. SEDDON and AGGIE

MR. S. (*flopping into a chair*). Your mother doesn't love me any more than she ever did, my dear.

PAM. Oh, yes she does. Once she was coldly indifferent and now she gets riled. Are things so bad, pa?

MR. S. Pretty bad and the trouble is I can't get them to face the facts. Janice and Grace should go to work.

PAM (*genuinely horrified*). Janice and Grace go to work? Why, dad, they're talented.

MR. S. Ah, yes, I had quite forgotten. They're talented. But what about Grace marrying this young Davenport? According to your mother he's in love with her.

PAM (*thoughtfully*). What do you think?

MR. S. It doesn't matter what I think.

PAM. It does with me, pa. Do *you* think he's in love with her?

MR. S. No.

PAM. Grace is very lovely.

MR. S. So are you, my dear.

PAM. Oh, no. (*Pause*) Pa?

MR. S. Yes?

PAM. Does dishwater make one's hands awfully ugly? I mean if they scrub pans.

MR. S. They do say so. (*Amused*) You're not sorry for what you promised just now?

PAM. Oh, no, I shall stick to what I said but I shall try every means in my power to make the work easy.

MR. S. (*taking one of her hands*). They're very nice hands.

PAM. Oh no, they're not. The fingers aren't especially long or tapering. They're not artistic hands. I'm sure I shall never bring any fame or fortune to the family.

MRS. S. (*voice from above*). Pam dear, aren't you going to start supper?

PAM. Yes, mother. (*She goes to d. c.*)

MR. S. Alas, one must eat if one does write poems and paint pictures.

PAM. Now, pa, you've got to be nice or I shall put pepper in your soup and mustard in your hash. Remember.

[EXIT d. c. *as curtain falls*

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE.—*Same as Act I. TIME, one week later; afternoon.* DISCOVERED PAM, CROSSING the stage toward D. R. She carries a small cardboard box filled with odds and ends of materials and wears a large percale apron. Just as she reaches D. R. MISS DENBY ENTERS and waylays her. MISS DENBY is dressed to go out, and is evidently much wrought up.

MISS D. There! Here you are! Where have you been? (PAM disconcerted, puts the box behind her. Immediately AUNT AGGIE is suspicious) You weren't in your room!

PAM (*desperately*). No—I was in the garret.

MISS D. In the garret!

PAM. Looking over some old things.

MISS D. (*slyly*). And thought you'd bring a few of them down. I see. (*Eyeing the box suspiciously*) Well, don't try to explain, child, don't try to explain! I suppose it's nothing more harmful than a few love letters.

PAM (*her honesty getting the best of her*). Oh, no, it's not love letters. I never had a love letter in my life. (*Holding forth the box*) It's only a few pieces of old cloth—odds and ends.

MISS D. (*astonished*). You're not going in for patchwork? (GOES DOWN C.)

PAM. Oh, no! I—I, that is, if you don't mind I'd rather not say anything more about it.

MISS D. Um-um! You're very mysterious! (*Turning about and regarding PAM earnestly*) There's something uneanny about you of late—something I don't like. (*Suddenly*) What were you and Paul Travers talking about last night?

PAM (*astonished*). Why, Aunt Aggie, what do you mean?

MISS D. Come here!

PAM (*with dignity*). I will—if you stop talking to me in such a manner. I consider it very unfair of you.

MISS D. I am never unfair. I pride myself on my keen sense of justice.

PAM (*going down c.*). Then why do you talk to me like this?

MISS D. (*driven to it*). Because you have bewitched Paul Travers.

PAM (*aghast*). Aunt Aggie!

MISS D. (*losing her head*). He's in love with you and so is Hugh Davenport (*With a sob*) and I fear for the Colonel.

PAM (*with genuine concern*). Good heavens, Aunt Aggie! You have let your imagination run away with you.

MISS D. (*between sobs*). Your mother says so. She says they will both want to marry you and you will refuse because you have promised your father you will stay with him and Grace and Janiee will lose them and—oh! perhaps I shall lose the Colonel.

PAM (*stamping her foot*). Oh! Of all nonsense! Just because Paul Travers wants to paint my picture do you think he is in love with me?

MISS D. (*fairly shrieking*). He wants to paint your picture!

PAM. Yes, but I am not foolish enough to suppose he is in love with me.

MISS D. (*pointing to the box, light breaking*). A-ah! And you are taking those odds and ends of cloth to him to let him decide what you shall wear! (PAM is *flabbergasted*) You have bewitched him! And you will bewitch the Colonel!

PAM (*shaking her*). Aunt Aggie, stop it! Stop it, this minute!

MISS D. You are a Ciree!

PAM. Hush!

MISS D. (*straightening her hat*). I shall go to the

Colonel now! Yes, I shall go to his apartments to warn him against you!

PAM (*weakly*). Good heavens, what have I done to deserve all this?

MISS D. (*going to d. r.*). I am going.

PAM. Very well. I suppose I can't stop you!

MISS D. (*suspiciously*). I suppose you have planned some clandestine meeting.

PAM (*sarcastically*). Oh, yes, I have. Out in the kitchen by the sink where I hold most of my rendezvous.

MISS D. You're a saucy child! [EXIT D. R.

PAM (*flopping into chair*). Of all things! (*Sits disconsolate, fingering the pieces of cloth. Front door slams.* ENTER D. C. JANICE *dressed to go out.* PAM *puts the box under her apron*)

JANICE (*going down stage*). I'm going over to the museum, Pam. Mr. Wright has sent for me.

PAM (*with some alarm*). There's nothing wrong with your picture? He—he is going to accept it, of course.

JANICE (*with a superior air*). I think there is no doubt of his accepting it. I have perfect faith in his superior judgment! (*Starts toward D. R., then turns back*) Oh, by the way, mother wants you to make a pudding for dinner. She had to go down town.

PAM. But I have all those peaches to preserve.

JANICE. Peaches? Preserved peaches! Why don't we buy them all preserved?

PAM. Because this way is cheaper, especially when the peaches are given one, as ours were.

JANICE. Grace is up-stairs writing and does *not* want to be disturbed—that is unless she has mail from her publishers.

PAM. I suppose she'll want to be called if Mr. Davenport comes.

JANICE. I don't think she expects him, but if he comes you'd better call her. (EXIT JANICE D. R. *Bell rings. COLONEL's laugh heard. PAM hides box in table drawer, and then stands c.*)

ENTER COLONEL D. C. *He is all smiles.*

COLONEL. Ah, my dear! (*Offering a cordial hand*) Good-afternoon!

PAM (*faintly*). Good-afternoon, Colonel O'Connor! (*He shakes her hand vigorously*)

COLONEL (*in a loud voice*). I am glad to see you, my dear. (*In a whisper*) In fact you're the very one I've come to see!

PAM (*horrified*). Oh!

COLONEL (*pulling forth a chair*). Sit down, my dear, or else I can't and I'm a bit fagged.

PAM (*backing away*). Really, Colonel, I'm sorry, but it's quite impossible for me to entertain you this afternoon.

COLONEL. Tut, tut, sit down! (*He sits*)

PAM (*desperately*). I've the dinner to get and a pudding to make.

COLONEL (*taking out his watch*). It's just three-thirty and you've all the time in the world.

PAM (*stoutly*). Aunt Aggie is out.

COLONEL. You don't say!

PAM. Perhaps if you hurried you'd catch her.

COLONEL. But I've no notion of hurrying. I'm quite satisfied. I didn't come to see Aggie—no, I didn't come to see Aggie at all.

PAM. Mother's down town. Everyone's out except Grace and me and Grace is not to be disturbed.

COLONEL. Well, well, it couldn't suit me better, I'm sure. (*Settles back*)

PAM (*nervously*). And I—I really ought to make that pudding, if you don't mind.

COLONEL (*fuming*). Pudding? Pudding? That ought not to take long. Make a hasty pudding! Ha-ha-ha! (*PAM smiles faintly*) Speaking of puddings, I want to congratulate you on the dinner you served last night. My child, it was a dinner for a gourmet. (*PAM edges off*) Come here! I want to talk to you about it. Damn that pudding! Come here, I say! (*PAM COMES*

forward reluctantly) Now sit down and take it easy.

PAM. Really, I —

COLONEL (*in a voice to obey*). Sit down! (PAM sits on the edge of a chair) Yes, my dear, I repeat it was a dinner for a gourmet. That salad—a gem, and the sauce, my dear Pam, the sauce was balm to the palate. Come now, talk to me. Where did you learn all this?

PAM (*miserably*). I didn't learn it. It just comes natural, I guess.

COLONEL (*delighted at the last remark*). Ah! You are a genius.

PAM (*forlornly*). A genius? I wish I was!

COLONEL. Who but a genius could turn out such dishes? My dear, you would do credit to any man's household.

PAM (*modestly*). I'm sure you are very kind to say so.

COLONEL (*in a whisper*). I'll say more. In fact I've come to say more.

PAM (*alarmed*). Oh!

COLONEL (*leaning toward her*). I've a delightful flat on Harlow Street, my dear, a flat that any woman would be proud of.—Pam, I've remained single long enough. I'm fifty-two next month. I consider it's time I married—Pam, my dear, you're sweet, you're pretty, you're clever. Pam—I —

PAM (*rising hastily*). Oh, Colonel O'Connor, you aren't proposing to me, are you?

COLONEL. That's just what I am doing, my dear.

PAM. Oh—(*horrified*) you mustn't!

COLONEL. Mustn't? Mustn't?

PAM. That is—oh, how terrible! What would Aunt Aggie say?

COLONEL. I've gotten over minding what she would say, my dear.

PAM. And she has gone to your home to keep you from this.

COLONEL. Gone to my home? Aggie?

PAM. Yes—to keep you from—from—from proposing to me. She said you would and I laughed at her.

COLONEL. That's the trouble with your Aunt Aggie, my dear. She's too shrewd a woman. She sees right through a body. (*Shaking his head*) Now I like a woman that's sweet and dependent!

PAM. Oh, Colonel, I'm neither sweet nor dependent, and you mustn't say such things to me. I can never marry you. In fact I think I shall never marry. Pa needs me!

COLONEL. It's the first time I ever asked a woman to marry me and I think it will be the last.

PAM. No, no, don't say that. Aren't you going to ask Aunt Aggie?

COLONEL (*rising*). No. I think I've done enough asking for one day.

PAM (*detaining him*). Please ask her—for my sake. (*Looks up at him beseechingly. Pause*)

COLONEL. Well—well, of course. I'll think that over, my dear.

PAM. But Aunt Aggie expects you to ask her.

COLONEL. Ugh, I don't know what right she's got to expect it. I'm sure I never gave her any encouragement.

PAM. Really? They told me —

COLONEL (*fuming*). Well, to be sure, I've been coming here a few years off and on, but it's to see the family.

PAM. Are you sure?

COLONEL. Quite.

PAM. Then I'm going to say I don't believe you.

COLONEL. Never kick a man that's down, my dear.

PAM. But you're not down. Aunt Aggie's the nicest woman in the world and she's clever, too, and Aunt Aggie loves you.

COLONEL. Um, she has a poor way of showing it. (*Begins pacing back and forth*)

PAM. That's because you don't propose. Ask her to

marry you and see. You think I can cook an excellent supper. Why, you've never eaten one of Aunt Aggie's. (*Front door slams*) Here she comes! (*Catching his arm to halt him*) You will ask her, won't you?

COLONEL. Is it Aggie?

PAM. Yes, it is, I'm sure, and I'll never tell a soul what's happened this afternoon if you'll ask her. (*MISS DENBY, unseen by either, appears at D. R.*)

COLONEL. I—I—

PAM. Please! (*MISS DENBY emits one long scream*. COLONEL and PAM wheel about simultaneously) Aunt Aggie!

MISS D. (GOING C.). You little sorceress. I've caught you. Caught you at your clandestine meeting. I knew it. I knew it all along. (*Turning to COLONEL*) As for you—words cannot express my contempt for you.

PAM. Hush, Aunt Aggie!

COLONEL (*to PAM*). And you said she loved me!

PAM. She does. Oh, don't you see?

COLONEL (*to MISS DENBY*). Woman, you may be glad to know your niece was just now speaking in your behalf when you so slyly entered. And let me say also that your niece is a lady.

MISS D. (*half screaming*). She is a vampire. As for you, you need never darken these doors again.

COLONEL (*taking his hat*). Very well, madam. (*With dignity*) I bid you good day. (*He starts to D. R.*)

PAM (*RUNNING after him*). Oh, Colonel, don't—

MISS D. Let him go. (*Waving her hand*)

[*EXIT COLONEL D. R.*]

PAM. Oh, what have you done? He was going to ask you to marry him!

MISS D. (*in a whisper*). What do you mean?

PAM. That's what I mean. He was going to ask you to marry him. (*For a second they stare at each other, then MISS DENBY, as the realization sweeps over her, begins to weep. PAM looks at her with compassion, but offers no comfort*)

ENTER D. R. HUGH DAVENPORT and MR. SEDDON.

MR. S. (GOING DOWN C.). Well, well, Pam, haven't got your apron off and I've brought a guest. (HUGH takes PAM'S hand)

MISS D. (with a final sob). If you'll excuse me, I'll go to my room. [EXIT D. C.

MR. S. (turning to watch her). What's the matter with Aggie? Doesn't her fall bonnet suit?

PAM. Now, dad, you know she wouldn't cry for such a little thing as that.

MR. S. I've known her to cry for less. (HUGH laughs)

PAM (to HUGH, who has been holding her hand since greeting). My hand, please, Mr. Davenport.

HUGH. Oh, I beg your pardon, Miss Seddon. (He releases it)

MR. S. Sit down, Hugh, my boy, sit down. Pam, I'm ashamed of you. Where's your hospitality?

PAM (indicating the davenport). Please forgive me, Mr. Davenport. Now I'll say, do sit down and make yourself at home.

HUGH. With pleasure, if you will, too.

PAM. Oh, I—I can't. Like Aunt Aggie, I'll have to be excused.

MR. S. Tut-tut, no such thing.

PAM. But, dad, I've a pudding to make.

MR. S. (firmly). No matter, we'll go without pudding to-night. I've brought Hugh here to be entertained and not a soul to entertain him.

PAM. I'm sorry.

MR. S. Show you are then by staying with him. He's no use for an old codger like me.

HUGH. I'm afraid you are coaxing your daughter to do something very disagreeable to her, and she's too polite to say so.

MR. S. No, no. Come, Pam, take off that ridiculous apron and sit down. I'm going down to have a look at the furnace. (PAM takes off her apron)

[EXIT D. C. MR. SEDDON

HUGH (*stiffly*). Please don't.

PAM. Don't?

HUGH. Take it off. It isn't ridiculous and I'm going.

PAM. Oh no, please don't.

HUGH. Don't?

PAM. Don't go. It isn't polite of you, and papa wouldn't like it.

HUGH. But I am keeping you from your work.

PAM. It's not your fault. It's papa's. He would have it so. (*Sits on one end of davenport*) Sit down.

HUGH (*sitting on other end*). Thank you.

PAM. Papa thinks that I spend too much time in the kitchen, and perhaps I do—but really to cook for six people takes a lot of planning and work.

HUGH (*with deep appreciation*). It must.

PAM. Then there are the dishes to wash.

HUGH. You do that, too?

PAM. Oh, yes. Of course Aunt Aggie offers to help, but Aunt Aggie—well, really, she isn't much of a help.

HUGH. No, I should judge not.

PAM. I really have quite a wonderful system and if it weren't for the pans I'd get on beautifully.

HUGH. The pans?

PAM. Yes, the cooking pans. Food sticks on them horribly and I can't seem to get it off.

HUGH (*all sympathy*). I see.

PAM. There's Dutch Cleanser and wire dish cloths but they don't do when you have baked fish in a square pan. I've thought of something— (*Stops suddenly as if she had spoken what she had not meant to and rises*)

HUGH. You've thought of something?

PAM. Oh, I didn't mean to say that. You—you won't tell, will you?

HUGH. Cross my heart.

PAM. I don't know what made me get so confidential to you.

HUGH. I wish I might take that for an implied compliment.

PAM (*sitting*). And I'm telling you all about kithehens and boring you to death.

HUGH. Never! I like to hear about kithehens. I adore kithehens. (*Settling back*)

PAM. Now you're just being polite.

HUGH. No, really. (*With enthusiasm*) Tell me some more. What sort of pans do you use? Agate or aluminum?

PAM. Well, you see most of our pans were bought years ago, so they're agate, but I *prefer* aluminum.

HUGH. Rather compact, aren't they, and all that sort of thing?

PAM. My—yes, you can get something like eight pans on one burner. There was a man at the Community House demonstrating them and I was wild for one, but mother said it wouldn't save money at all. (*With a sigh*) Mother's like that. I suppose most old-fashioned housekeepers are.

HUGH (*sadly*). I suppose so.

PAM. Now I like things compact. I'd love a dear tiny kithehen in a dear tiny house—a nice white little kithehen where you can stand in the middle of the floor and reach everything you want to by stretching out your arms.

HUGH (*laughing*). That would be jolly.

PAM. A dear little house—white with green shutters and muslin curtains in the windows. Of course I want electricity and baths and all the conveniences—

HUGH. Of course.

PAM. But I want fireplaces, too, and settles and high wainseoting.

HUGH. Just my idea!

PAM. Oh no! (*He looks hurt*) You want a palace with a huge kithehen and a hundred pantries! (*Shuts her eyes better to visualize*) A stone palace with long heavy glass windows and long rooms! (*He looks at her aghast*) A formal reception hall, a large dining-room

with silver and cut glass and heavy curtains! A library with rows upon rows of dull-covered volumes! (*With a look of disgust HUGH gets up and walks a few steps away. She does not notice he has gone*) Wonderful tapestries and statues in bronze and marble. Rare pictures and choice pottery, that is what I have pictured for you. (*She opens her eyes with a smile and finds he is gone*) Oh! I haven't offended you? (*Rising*) You aren't angry?

HUGH. No, I couldn't be angry with you, but I'm sorry, deucedly sorry you know me so little!

PAM (*going over to him*). But am I not right? Don't you want all that?

HUGH. No!

PAM. I'm sorry then if I have misjudged you.

HUGH. I'm sorry if you think me like that because I'm not a bit like it. (*His good humor returning*) Don't you want to sit down and talk and find out what I am like?

PAM (*doubtfully*). Do you think we'll agree?

HUGH. Perfectly. (*They sit*) Now you accuse me of wanting a palace and in reality I hate a palace. I prefer—(*Closing his eyes and repeating her own words*) a dear little house—white with green shutters and muslin curtains in the windows. Of course I want electricity, baths and all the conveniences.

PAM. Stop it! You're impudent!

HUGH. I'm never impudent, begging your pardon.

PAM. You're just agreeing to be agreeable. Now I'm going to see if you really do agree with me. I'm going to ask your opinion before I state mine.

HUGH. Go on. (*He crosses his leg and settles back*)

PAM. You're most terribly confident.

HUGH. Of course I am. You see I know you better than you know me.

PAM. We shall see. Now! (*Pause*) Do you—like the city or the country?

HUGH (*closing his eyes and putting back his head*). The country!

PAM. Um-um, so do I. Do you like meat or fish?

HUGH (*with perfect confidence*). Meat.

PAM. Um-um, so do I.—Do you—like musical comedy or straight play?

HUGH (*hesitant—he really likes musical comedy*). Er—straight play.

PAM (*laughing*). So do I, but I don't believe you do.

HUGH. Go on.

PAM. Do you like fireplaces and a good book?

HUGH. I adore them.

PAM (*slyly*). Do you like the new poetry?

HUGH. No!

PAM (*laughing softly*). I don't really, but you mustn't tell.

HUGH. I won't.

PAM. Do you prefer winter to summer?

HUGH. Summer! (*He is sure he is right. Pause, during which she looks at him half smiling. After a second he opens his eyes and interpreting the look on her face says promptly*) Winter!

PAM. Ah-ha, I caught you, sir.

HUGH. No, no, really I wasn't thinking. I meant winter, really I did—sports and all that, you know.

PAM. Why didn't you say so then?

HUGH. Well, to tell the truth, I meant to, but summer just slipped off my tongue.

PAM (*severely*). How many times are you going to work that little stunt, sir?

HUGH. Now I say you're unfair. Ask my landlady if you don't believe me. She knows what I like. She knows I prefer winter with its snow and ice and clear air and sparkling sunshine and —

PAM. Stop! Stop! I believe you.

HUGH. Then you've got to admit we agree perfectly—even in all the details of life—now don't we?

PAM. Yes, we do. (*They regard each other. Presently he gets up with a low whistle and walks to the other side of the room and looks at her there very solemnly. She does not take her eyes from him*)

HUGH (*at last*). Well?

PAM. I was wondering what it matters if we do agree.

HUGH (*wheeling about*). The devil! (*He starts for D. R. and runs into PAUL TRAVERS ENTERING. After a second in which they glower at each other EXIT HUGH D. R.* PAM *looks from one to the other, gives a sigh for HUGH's departure, then turns to TRAVERS*)

PAM. Janiee isn't at home, Mr. Travers. (*Hastily*) In fact I don't think she will be at home until supper.

PAUL. So your dad just told me in the hall. But I didn't come to see Janiee.

PAM (*weakly*). Oh!

PAUL (*jovially*). I eame to see you and I'm deucedly glad I did (*Surveying her from head to foot*) beeause I like you immensely in that gown.

PAM (*with a gesture of despair*). Oh, this old thing. It's a hundred years old.

PAUL. I want to paint your portrait, some day. (*With a twinkle*) You don't know what a favor I am bestowing upon you—some day it may hang in the Luxemburg.

PAM (*backing away*). Oh dear, I don't believe I'd want a picture of myself in the Luxemburg. It would be so hard to live up to it.

PAUL. Not at all. Whatever you did then would be quite proper.

PAM (*fairly gasping*). But I'm so ordinary I'd never do anything interesting.

PAUL. Who says you are ordinary?

PAM. Everyone. It's a known fact.

PAUL. Pardon me. But I don't believe it.

PAM. You don't know me.

PAUL (*GOING toward her*). But I want to very mueh.

PAM (*quickly*). Is that why you want to paint my portrait?

PAUL. Partly.

PAM. Then I don't think I had better have it painted.

PAUL. You detest me, don't you? Confess! You wouldn't talk to me at the party the other night. You refused to sit by me at dinner—in fact you have done everything to avoid me.

PAM (*thinking she has hurt him*). I think you paint divinely.

PAUL. Is that all?

PAM. And I think you're very nice.

PAUL. Rats! (*Looks at her solemnly*)

PAM. Please, Mr. Travers, go away.

PAUL. No I won't. (*Sits in chair*)

PAM. I'm afraid you've been pampered.

PAUL. I'm used to getting what I want. I never was refused anything before.

PAM. Heavens, I've always been refused what I wanted most.

PAUL. How is that when your sisters have had so much?

PAM. Oh, that's different. They are talented and I'm not.

PAUL (*amused*). Do you mind not being talented?

PAM. No, except that it would be nice to make a fortune for dad but I suppose Janiee and Grace will do that. They are very clever.

PAUL. You have great faith in your sisters.

PAM (*seriously*). Oh, yes, I have always been taught to have faith in them.

PAUL. And doesn't anyone have faith in you?

PAM. They would be foolish if they did.

PAUL. Then I am foolish because I have loads of faith in you. Come. (*Rising and going to her*) Come, let me paint your portrait. (*She shakes her head*) Will you let me take you riding? (*She shakes denial*) Will you let me come to see you?

PAM (*in alarm*). Oh no, that would never do. (*Backing to d. c.*) And really you mustn't ask such things of me.

PAUL (*catching her hand impetuously*). But I love you!

PAM. Love me!

PAUL (*somewhat taken back*). Why not?

PAM. You can't. That is, you must have made a mistake. (*With a wail*) Oh, Mr. Travers, you haven't been drinking.

PAUL (*dropping her hand*). Jove! You *are* an extraordinary girl.

PAM. Extraordinary? Oh, never! I'm very ordinary!

PAUL (*rubbing his head*). Then I'm extraordinary. At any rate the situation is extraordinary!

PAM (*near tears*). But you made it—the situation I mean.

PAUL. Jove! I don't know whether I did or not.

PAM (*driven to it*). Perhaps I have bewitched you.

PAUL. Eh?

PAM (*half weeping*). Yes, yes, I do that sort of thing. I didn't know it but Aunt Aggie says I do! Oh, Mr. Travers, I can never marry you, never, never, never! In fact, I don't intend to marry!

ENTER D. R. MRS. SEDDON. *She has just come home from down town. She looks at them both a moment as if trying to take in the situation, then goes down to Paul, her hand extended.*

MRS. S. My dear Mr. Travers. I've caught you this time.

PAUL (*startled*). Er—how do you do, Mrs. Seddon? (*Shake hands*)

MRS. S. And you must stay to tea. Grace will expect it.

PAUL. I'm sorry, but really I —

MRS. S. Now, I won't take no for an answer. Besides Pam has made a pudding!

PAM. No, mother, I haven't.

MRS. S. Haven't made the pudding? Didn't Grace tell you?

PAM. Yes.

MRS. S. Why, Pam!

PAM. To tell the truth, mother, I haven't had a minute to myself. I've been entertaining callers all the afternoon. (MRS. SEDDON looks from PAUL to PAM suspiciously)

PAUL (stiffly). Don't worry about the lack of a pudding on my account, Mrs. Seddon, because it's quite impossible for me to stay. (Offering his hand) Good afternoon. (Nods to PAM and EXIT d. r.)

MRS. S. (after a dreadful pause). Pam, what have you been saying to him?

PAM. Nothing much. He has been doing most of the talking.

MRS. S. He asked you to marry him?

PAM. Yes, mother.

MRS. S. And you refused?

PAM. Yes, mother.

MRS. S. You are mad. You have spoilt everything. He will never come here again. If you have no intention of marrying, why must you steal your sister's beau and —

PAM (RUNNING to davenport and flinging herself upon it face down). Stop! Stop! I won't listen to you. I won't. (Kicks lustily and the cushions fly in all directions. EXIT MRS. SEDDON aghast, d. c. PAM quiets down and sobs quietly in a cushion)

ENTER D. R. JANICE weeping; she looks about the room, sees no one and goes quietly to window and conceals herself behind the curtain. After a second simultaneously both break into weeping so that neither one hears the other. ENTER GRACE D. C., sobbing desperately, her returned poems in her hand. She sees and hears neither sister and flops into chair UP stage. The sobs of all three mingle. ENTER D. R. MR. SEDDON, stops short at the sight.

MR. S. Good lord! (All three look up at once and discover each other)

PAM (*absolutely miserable*). Oh, pa! (*This is a cue*)

JANICE (*exploding*). They have refused my picture!

GRACE. And my poems have come back!

PAM. And I—I—I am a vampire!

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE.—*Same as Acts I and II. TIME, two weeks later. The room is in an upheaval, bereft of its draperies, ornaments, etc., the furniture covered ready for removal. The rugs are rolled up and a steamer trunk is in the lower L. corner. DISCOVERED MRS. SEDDON, bejewelled, besilked and helpless in the middle of the floor, weeping quietly. At her L. stands AGGIE also helpless and near to tears.*

MRS. S. I—I don't think I can bear it.

MISS D. Think of me!

MRS. S. (*with scorn*). Think of *you*! As if *you* —

MISS D. At least you have your family, but I— (*Dramatically*) I have no one. There is one picture clearly before my mind. A poor old woman in a lone room with no one to love her.

MRS. S. (*bitterly*). Better go unloved than to be loved by a man who has no sense.

MISS D. No sense?

MRS. S. (*for once too upset to appreciate her own wit*). Yes—no sense in more ways than one. (*Door-bell rings. Sound of hurrying feet*)

MISS D. There goes Pam again. She does act strangely. If she were a daughter of mine I'd be worried about her.

MRS. S. I've no time to worry. The only thing I can think of is the foreclosure of the mortgage on our h-h-home!

MISS D. She actually guards the front door. You needn't tell me but what she expects something.

MRS. S. (*sitting on the trunk*). I wish I could be as hopeful.

MISS D. So do I. (*More to herself*) I used to think he'd come back to me. The first week I was quite certain of him but then when the second week came —

MRS. S. For heaven's sake, Aggie, what are you talking about?

MISS D. (*hurt*). Why, Rachel—the Colonel, of course. It is a vital topic with me.

MRS. S. Evidently it isn't with him.

MISS D. (*getting a little excited*). He—he was bewitched! She bewitched him as she has the others. (*With terrible emphasis*) Do you know Paul Travers proposed to her?

MRS. S. (*tapping her foot*). I do.

MISS D. And I heard from outside—from outside, mind you, that he felt terribly when she refused him.

MRS. S. And I thought all the time she was only a simple little girl.

MISS D. She is complex—very complex, and she is deep, very deep.

MRS. S. She has ruined her sister's life. Janice will never be the same.

MISS D. (*dramatically*). She has ruined mine. Even although he comes to me penitent I shall feel he preferred her.

MRS. S. It is very evident.

MISS D. And I did love him. (*Weeps a little*)

MRS. S. (*hating to say it*). I—I have given up all hopes I had in Hugh.

MISS D. (*fairly shrieking*). *Hugh!*

MRS. S. He seems to avoid Grace.

MISS D. (*in a terrible voice*). He loves *her!*

MRS. S. (*gasping*). Pam?

MISS D. Of course. Oh, is it possible you, her own mother, are so blind?

MRS. S. (RUNNING to AGGIE). You don't mean that Hugh — (Breathless)

MISS D. Loves her? That's just what I mean.

MRS S. (smiling). Oh, Aggie! (With sudden enlightenment) Then—why are we moving—giving up everything? Does Charles know of this?

MISS D. (coldly). You don't for one minute suppose she'll accept him, do you? Ah, Rachel, I know your own daughter better than you. She is a siren. She entices them only to make them suffer.

MRS. S. (sitting beside AGGIE). Oh!

MISS D. She will never marry him. Hasn't she said herself she will never marry? What better proof do you want?

MRS. S. (weeping). Oh, that I should be punished with such a daughter!

MISS D. You have lost Hugh and his millions as I have lost the Colonel. He will never go back to Grace —never—no more than the Colonel will come back to me. You—in fact we all, except Charles, thought she was unimportant but let me tell you we've learned, all of us, a tremendous lesson.

MRS. S. (sighing). The lesson of the ugly duckling.

MISS D. I'm only expecting her to bring us fame and fortune now.

MRS. S. No, Aggie, Pam can never do that.

MISS D. (ready to believe anything of her). I'm not so sure.

MISS S. If only some one would bring us money. (She rises) I—I wouldn't feel so bad now if they didn't bring fame.

MISS D. (dolefully). Where do we sleep to-night?

MRS. S. You and I are to stay at the Lothrops'. The girls and Charles will sleep at home. (Suddenly) Aggie, do you think I shall be able to stand it?

MISS D. You must.

MRS. S. (at the door). But it is so dreadful to be

disappointed in one's husband and children. I was confident of Janice and Grace.

MISS D. Poor dears—they are awfully broken up.

ENTER D. C. MR. SEDDON.

MR. S. You had better go up, Rachel. The moving van has come.

MRS. S. Has it come? (*Gives a hysterical cry and EXIT D. R., RUNNING and weeping. For a second MR. SEDDON stands helpless regarding AGGIE. AGGIE stares back at him, then suddenly sobs wildly and EXIT D. R. Door-bell rings. Sound of hurrying feet. PAM runs in D. C. and EXIT quickly D. R.*)

MR. S. (*bewildered*). Pam? (*But she has gone*)

ENTER D. C. JANICE.

JANICE (*stiffly*). I suppose I may keep the secretary you gave me.

MR. S. Eh? Your secretary? Oh yes, yes, my dear, of course, of course.

JANICE. Thanks awfully. (*Turns to go*)

MR. S. Janice.

JANICE (*turning*). Yes?

MR. S. It makes me feel bad to see you take things in this manner. After all, the outlook is not so bad for you and Grace.

JANICE. Are you being sarcastic?

MR. S. Oh no, my dear, not at all. You see it's this way. You've had a bit of a shock, but you'll thank your stars some day that you had it. It's going to make you a lot wiser and far more beloved.

JANICE (*coldly*). Is that all you have to say?

MR. S. Not quite. You and Graee both needed it and you'll see the truth of my words in the years to come. Not now, of course. I wouldn't expect you to now. It is life, my dear. We all need shocks now and then, some more than others, and after all, the unfortunate ones are those who don't get jostled. That's all. (*She GOES to D. C.*)

ENTER D. R. COLONEL, *hat in hand. He looks a bit spent.*

COLONEL (*in a whisper*). Charles —

MR. S. (*turning*). My god, man—you. I wasn't ex-peeting you.

COLONEL (*still whispering*). Do you think she'll see me?

MR. S. She?

COLONEL. Aggie?

MR. S. Jove, man, she's mad to see you.

COLONEL. What?

MR. S. She's mad to see you.

COLONEL (*sinking on a chair*). I've missed her terribly—terrible.

MR. S. Shall I call her?

COLONEL. Wait. (*Pause*) Charles, I'm sorry, deueedly sorry about (*Waving his hands to include the room*) this! I've a little money, surplus, you know. Is there anything I can do for you?

MR. S. (*with a twinkle*). Yes—take Aggie off my hands. [EXIT D. C. SEDDON

(COLONEL *paces the floor, chuckling*.)

ENTER D. R. MISS DENBY.

MISS D. (*very dignified*). You sent for me? (*Plainly she intends to have a scene*)

COLONEL (*looking up and smiling*). I did, Aggie.

MISS D. I am here.

COLONEL. Er—er yes, you are here and so am I.

MISS D. Well?

COLONEL. We are both here.

MISS D. Yes.

COLONEL. Alone.

MISS D. So I observe.

COLONEL. We haven't been alone before in this house—ever.

MISS D. Perhaps not.

COLONEL. We are not likely to be alone very long.

MISS D. Well?

COLONEL (*humbly*). One should make the most of one's opportunities.

MISS D. (*triumphant*). Ah!

COLONEL (*moving a step nearer*). Aggie, will you marry me? I've a nice little flat on Harlow Street, a modern convenient little flat that needs a fine little woman like you, Aggie.

MISS D. (*now sure of him*). Sir, I think you have an apology to make to me first, after the way you've acted.

COLONEL (*all humbleness*). Yes, Aggie.

MISS D. (*rubbing it in*). Aren't you ashamed of yourself?

COLONEL. Yes.

MISS D. Don't you think you acted like a ridiculous boy?

COLONEL. Yes.

MISS D. Then I want you to formally admit it and ask my pardon.

COLONEL. Of course, Aggie.

MISS D. My pardon on your knees. (*Getting bold, but she has asked too much*)

COLONEL (*aghast*). On my knees? (*He thinks, too, of his rheumatic joints*)

MISS D. (*unflinching*). On your knees.

COLONEL. But you have no mercy, Aggie. Think of my rheumatism.

MISS D. (*encouraged to dangerous depths by his humbleness*). On your knees.

COLONEL. She might see me.

MISS D. Who?

COLONEL. Anyone. (*Suddenly*) No, I will not submit to such foolishness, I—a late Colonel of Hussars! (*He starts toward D. R.*)

MISS D. (*with misgivings*). Where are you going?

COLONEL (*in a voice that is final*). To my flat in Harlow Street. (*At this AGGIE bursts into hysterical sobbing*) For heaven's sake, woman! (*He goes back to her*)

MISS D. I am so unhappy—no—h-home, no f-friends—just a lonely old woman.

COLONEL. Aggie, calm yourself. Have I not offered you a home?

MISS D. Yes.

COLONEL (*getting eloquent*). And myself as a husband?

MISS D. Y-yes.

COLONEL. And half of my worldly goods?

MISS D. (*nodding, but still wailing*). Yes, oh yes.

COLONEL. Then —— (*Shaking her*) What is it?

MISS D. B-but you won't get down on your knees for me?

COLONEL. Well, of all things! (*She wails*) There, there, hush. (*After looking about slyly he gets down on his knees very carefully*) I suppose to please you, but I feel like a damn fool. Ugh.

MISS D. (*peeks from behind her handkerchief and sees him, and immediately her whole face lights up*). Oh, how wonderful! (*Hand on her heart, she closes her eyes for a second*) I always wondered what it felt like to have a man on his knees before me.

COLONEL. And I always wondered what it felt like to be there. Now I know, and, damn it, I don't want to feel like it again. (*He staggers up*)

MISS D. Oh, you dear, it was wonderful. Of course I forgive you everything.

COLONEL (*rubbing his knee joints*). I should think you might.

ENTER D. C. MRS. SEDDON.

MRS. S. Oh, here you are. For goodness' sakes go up-stairs and tell the man what's to go from your room to-day and what to-morrow.

MISS D. (*coming to earth*). Oh.

MRS. S. Do you know where we're going?

MISS D. (*coyly*). I know where I'm going.

COLONEL. Ahem.

MISS D. (*starting to D. C.*). You tell her, Luke dear.
[EXIT D. C.]

MRS. S. (*to COLONEL*). You haven't?

COLONEL. I have, and she's consented to share my Harlow Street flat.

MRS. S. (*flopping on nearest chair*). Oh, I'm so relieved. I couldn't imagine where we'd put all her trinkets and ornaments in our new place. It's very small, you know.

COLONEL. Yes, it must have worried you considerably.

MRS. S. It did. (*Rising and going to him*) Do you know I think it's very sweet of you to take Aggie, because really she is very trying—laughs in the wrong place, you know, and all that. Of course, I know I oughtn't to tell tales, but really I did want you to know how deeply I appreciate the favor you are bestowing upon us.

COLONEL. It's very kind of you to say so.

MRS. S. And I want you to come to see us as always. Of course (*whimpering*) it won't be the same. We—we have been terribly reduced in circumstances, but I suppose I shall have to make the best of it. Poor Janice and Grace, it's for them I feel most deeply. *I* can suffer, but to see *them*. Oh, it is too horrible. *You* understand.

COLONEL. Yes, *I* understand. But you must hope for the best. One can never tell. The unexpected often happens. (*Door-bell rings*)

MRS. S. (*jumping*). Oh, my nerves are on edge.

ENTER D. C. PAM and runs off D. R.

COLONEL. Well, well, evidently somebody expects something.

MRS. S. Pam has been like that for a week now.

COLONEL. But what is it? What's the matter with her?

MRS. S. I don't know. None of us know. She sits as if in a trance and when the bell rings that's the way

she acts. No one can stop her. Aggie attempted to and, well, she never attempted to again. (*With a sigh*) I suppose we're all a little upset. You couldn't wonder.

ENTER D. R. PAM, *followed by HUGH.*

HUGH. How do you do, Mrs. Seddon? (*Nods to COLONEL*)

MRS. S. (*offering a limp hand*). Oh, Mr. Davenport, I'm not myself. We—none of us are ourselves.

HUGH. No?

MRS. S. It's a terrible strain.

HUGH (*with a laugh*). It is. I remember when our family moved from Canyon Street to the Avenue, we were all in.

MRS. S. Ah, my boy, but you were moving into a grand new house and we—we—oh, I don't think I can bear it.

PAM. Mother.

MRS. S. (*weeping softly*). They all speak cross to me. They don't realize I've always had everything, and I don't see how I'm going to get on without it.

PAM (*distressed and horrified*). Please, mother.

MRS. S. Oh, dear me, I'll go out; I see I displease you. [EXIT D. C.]

COLONEL (*following*). There, there, Mrs. Seddon, weep a bit on my shoulder. It will do you good.

MISS D. (*voice from without*). That's a pretty speech for a newly engaged man to make. She'll do nothing of the kind. (*HUGH hears and wants to laugh, but PAM does not move a muscle and he refrains*)

PAM (*quietly*). I'm sure you can say what you've come to say right here; that is if you really intend to say it.

HUGH (*wistfully*). I do, but I wish the atmosphere were a bit more conducive.

PAM. I'm sorry.

HUGH. That's final? You won't make it better?

PAM. Do you think I can create an atmosphere?

HUGH. Where I am concerned—yes.

PAM. What do you want me to do?

HUGH. Be nice to me—please.

PAM. But if I'm nice to you, you'll —— (She stops suddenly)

HUGH. I'll what?

PAM. Propose to me, and I don't want you to do that.

HUGH. Why?

PAM. Because I should hate to refuse you anything.

HUGH (eagerly). Really? You feel that way toward me?

PAM (quickly). No—no, I say I should hate to, but I would.

HUGH (sitting on the edge of the table). But I'm not going to take no for an answer.

PAM. Oh, yes you are.

HUGH. Then I'm not going to ask the question.

PAM. Just as you like. (Pause, during which he regards her wistfully)

HUGH. I'd do anything for you. I wish you'd let me prove it.

PAM. I can't. There's no use asking, and I—I wish you'd go away.

HUGH (rising). Of course, if you wish it.

PAM (a sob in her voice). I do. (HUGH turns toward D. R.) Hugh!

HUGH (turning quickly). Yes?

PAM. If—if I should ever want you, would you come to me?

HUGH. From the ends of the earth, Pam.

PAM. I—I might want you to-night. And I—I might never want you.

HUGH. I don't understand.

PAM. You will if I want you, and if I don't it doesn't matter. If I want you, I'll put a signal in the middle window there. (Pointing)

HUGH. A signal?

PAM. Yes—I can't telephone, but I'll put something in that window that you'll surely see. (*Offering her hand*) Good-bye. (*Wistfully*)

HUGH. Good-bye. (*He shakes her hand quickly and* EXIT D. R. *PAM stands a moment looking after him*)

ENTER D. C. GRACE.

GRACE. Has he gone?

PAM (*starting*). Yes. Did you want to see him?

GRACE. Why should I? He doesn't want to see me.

PAM (*with a little sob*). Grace, I love him.

GRACE. He loves you. Why don't you marry him?

PAM. Simply because he has so much money and we have none. (*Pause*) Are you angry with me for loving him?

GRACE. No, that's what I came to tell you. I was afraid you would think so. I've been thinking over a lot of things this past week. I'm—I'm going to be different.

PAM (*duly amazed*). Grace.

GRACE. I'm going to work, and, really, I feel lots happier now that I've made up my mind. As father told Janice, this shock will do us good.

PAM. And what does Janice think?

GRACE. She doesn't agree with him, of course, but she will some day. Janice is all right. It would be nice to have money, but after all — (*Door-bell rings. PAM listens as if petrified, then runs off D. R.*) For heaven's sake —

ENTER D. C. MR. SEDDON *in his shirt sleeves, hammer in one hand.*

MR. S. Can't someone muffle that bell? Grace, go up-stairs to your mother. She's having hysterics about a piece of furniture in the den.

[EXIT D. C. GRACE *quickly*

ENTER D. R. PAM. *She carries an opened telegram and is much excited.*

PAM (*running to her father*). Pa! Pa!

MR. S. (*dropping the hammer*). What is it, my dear?

PAM. Pa! (*Looks up into his face and tries to speak, but words fail her. Puts her head on his shoulder and weeps*)

MR. S. (*who has but one interpretation for tears*). There—there—dear, what have those dreadful men done? It's a shame. The whole business is a rotten shame.

PAM (*struggling*). No—no—no, it isn't that. You don't understand. Here (*Passing him the telegram*) Read this.

MR. S. (*reading*). We accept your offer. The Wonder Rag is just what you recommend it to be. (*He looks puzzled*)

PAM (*bursting into laughter*). Don't you see? I've brought you fame and fortune and you thought I didn't have a spark of talent.

MR. S. The Wonder Rag?

PAM. Yes—yes, I invented it. It's made of cloth and wire. It does the work of powders and elbow grease combined. It's—it's just what its name implies—for cleansing pans, you know!

MR. S. But—but —

PAM. Oh, pa, I never knew you to be stupid before. Don't you see I've sold it to a big concern. (*Indicating telegram*) Look.

MR. S. (*reading*). Cruthers and Cruthers!

PAM. They've bought my Wonder Rag, idea and all. They've accepted my offer. (*In a great whisper*) It was \$50,000 down and royalties.

MR. S. What!!!

PAM. Yes—yes, we are rich, aren't we? At least we will be. We won't have to move. We can stay here. (*Very excited*) Janice and Grace can study —

MR. S. Come here, let me look at you.

PAM (*pulling him to D. C.*). I want to tell them. Come.

MR. S. (*catching her arm and resisting*). I want to look at you. By Jove! I can't believe my ears. Little Pam! (*She struggles*)

PAM (*pulling*). Come. You've all the rest of your life to look at me. Come.

MR. S. (*submitting*). But how did you happen —

PAM (*EXIT D. C. with him*). To invent it? Purely vanity, pa. I wanted to save my hands. (*The sound of their feet hurrying over the stairs, then the opening of a door and murmurs of voices. At last very loud and distinct Miss Denby's voice is heard*)

MISS D. (*off stage*). You blessed child. I always knew you were a wonder.

MRS. S. (*off stage*). Pam dear, come and kiss your mother. You are a Denby through and through.

MR. S. (*off stage*). Don't you believe it, Pam. You're a Seddon. You take after your great grandfather Seddon who invented —

MRS. S. (*off stage*). He never invented a thing. If she's a Seddon, she's the brightest one I ever saw! (*Sound of a door closing softly, and silence. Presently ENTER D. C. PAM. She surveys the room. It is shadowy. The sun has set. She regards the window a moment, then EXITS D. R. and RE-ENTERS with a huge lighted lantern, which she places carefully in the middle window, then sits down to wait for HUGH*)

CURTAIN

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THE LAST CHANCE

PRICE 25 CENTS

Comedy in 2 acts, by A. E. Bailey. 2 males, 12 females. 1 interior. Time, 1½ hours. Full of action, bright and witty dialogue, incidentally introducing a burlesque on "Lord Ullin's Daughter." For schools and colleges.

A LEGAL PUZZLE

PRICE 25 CENTS

Farce comedy in 3 acts, by W. A. Tremayne. 7 males, 5 females. 3 interiors. Time, 2½ hours. This play can be highly recommended, the scenes are easy, the dialogue brisk and snappy, and the action rapid.

LODGERS TAKEN IN

PRICE 25 CENTS

Comedy in 3 acts, by L. C. Tees. 6 males, 4 females. 1 interior. Time, 2½ hours. A husband with a strong case of the "green-eyed monster" taking a trip abroad, places his home in charge of a ne'er-do-well nephew. The nephew rents the rooms to tenants, whose diversified characters present great opportunity for comedy acting. This is adapted from the same work upon which Wm. Gillette's famous "All the Comforts of Home" is based.

MISTRESS OF ST. IVES

PRICE 25 CENTS

Drama of the new South in 3 acts, by G. V. May. 7 males, 5 females. 1 interior. Time, 2½ hours. The cast has a typical southern planter of olden times, his two daughters, a peppery southern major, a lawyer from the North, a comical colored valet, etc., etc.

NEVER AGAIN

PRICE 25 CENTS

Farce in 3 acts, by A. E. Wills. 7 males, 5 females. 1 interior. Time, 2½ hours. Fletcher, a crabbed husband, refuses a reference to Dora, a discharged maid. In Marie, the new maid, he discovers an attractive dancer to whom he had been very attentive at a recent ball; the schemes devised by the two maids to punish Fletcher lead to many amusing complications and to an unusual climax.

PETER PIPER'S TROUBLES

PRICE 25 CENTS

Comedy in 4 acts, by J. H. Slater. 5 males, 3 females. 2 interiors. Time, 2½ hours. The troubles are caused largely by his desire to oblige his friends and are of a social, financial and business variety, all of which are finally overcome.

PHYLLIS'S INHERITANCE

PRICE 25 CENTS

Comedy in 3 acts, by F. H. Bernard. 6 males, 9 females. 1 interior, 1 exterior. Time, 2 hours. Phyllis, Philip's wife, is to inherit a fortune from an East Indian uncle, provided she marries his adopted son, who is about to visit her. Two men call with introductory letters, which she does not read, supposing each in turn to be the adopted son.

A RUNAWAY COUPLE

PRICE 25 CENTS

Farce in 2 acts, by W. A. Tremayne. 4 males, 4 females. 1 interior. Time, 2 hours. A married man of nervous temperament, temporarily in charge of an eloping lady, while the husband-to-be is procuring the license, is himself accused of having run away with her. The arrival of the absent lover relieves the situation and leads to an unusually effective climax.

TOO MANY HUSBANDS

PRICE 25 CENTS

Farce in 2 acts, by A. E. Wills. 8 males, 4 females. 1 interior. Time, 2 hours. The action is continuous, dialogue snappy and climax so unexpected, that this farce can be recommended as one of the most laughable.

PLAYS WE RECOMMEND

Fifteen Cents Each (Postage, 1 Cent Extra)

Unless Otherwise Mentioned

			Acts	Males	Females	Time
Arabian Nights		Farce	3	4	5	2 1/4 h
Bundle of Matches	(27c.)	Comedy	2	1	7	1 1/2 h
Crawford's Claim	(27c.)	Drama	3	9	3	2 1/4 h
Her Ladyship's Niece	(27c.)	Comedy	4	4	4	1 1/2 h
Just for Fun	(27c.)	"	3	2	4	2 h
Men, Maids, Matchmakers		" (27c.)	3	4	4	2 h
Our Boys		"	3	6	4	2 h
Puzzled Detective		Farce	3	5	3	1 h
Three Hats		"	3	5	4	2 h
Timothy Delano's Courtship		Comedy	2	2	3	1 h
Up-to-Date Anne		"	2	2	8	1 h
White Shawl	(27c.)	Farce	2	3	3	1 1/2 h
Fleeing Flyer		"	1	4	3	1 1/4 h
From Punkin' Ridge		Drama	1	6	3	1 1/4 h
Handy Solomon		Farce	1	2	2	20 m
Hoosier School		"	1	5	5	30 m
Kiss in the Dark		"	1	2	8	45 m
Larry		"	1	4	4	45 m
Love Birds' Matrimonial Agency		"	1	8	4	30 m
Married Lovers		Comedy	1	2	4	45 m
Ma's New Boarders	(27c.)	Farce	1	4	4	30 m
Mrs. Forester's Crusade		"	1	1	2	30 m
New Pastor		Sketch	1	2	2	30 m
Relations		Farce	1	3	1	20 m
Standing Room Only		Comedy	1	3	1	35 m
Stormy Night		"	1	3	1	40 m
Surprises	(27c.)	Farce	1	2	8	30 m
Tangles	(27c.)	"	1	4	2	30 m
Little Rogue Next Door		"	1	2	8	40 m
'Till Three P. M.		"	1	2	1	20 m
Train to Mauro		"	1	2	1	15 m
When Women Rule		"	1	2	4	15 m
Won by a Kodak		Comedy	1	2	8	50 m
April Fools		Farce	1	3	0	30 m
Fun in a Schoolroom		"	1	4	0	40 m
Little Red Mare		"	1	3	0	35 m
Manager's Trials		"	1	9	0	45 m
Medica		"	1	7	0	35 m
Mischievous Bob		Comedy	1	6	0	40 m
Cheerful Companion		Dialogue	1	0	2	25 m
Dolly's Double		"	1	1	1	20 m
Drifted Apart		"	1	1	1	80 m
Gentle Touch		"	1	1	1	30 m
John's Emmy		"	1	1	1	20 m
Point of View		"	1	1	1	20 m
Professor's Truant Glove		"	1	1	1	20 m
Belles of Blackville		Minstrel	1	0	any no.	2 h
Sweet Family	(27c.)	Entertainment	1	0	8	1 h
Conspirators	(27c.)	Comedy	2	0	12	40 m
A Day and a Night	(27c.)	"	2	0	10	1 h
Gertrude Mason, M.D.	(27c.)	Farce	1	0	7	30 m
In Other People's Shoes		Comedy	1	0	8	50 m
Maidens All Forlorn	(27c.)	"	3	0	6	1 1/4 h
Mary Ann		"	1	0	5	30 m
Romance of Phyllis	(27c.)	"	3	0	4	1 1/4 h
Fuss vs. Feathers		Mock Trial	1	4	4	80 m
Tanglefoot vs. Peruna		" "	1	7	18	1 1/2 h
Great Libel Case		" "	1	21	0	2 h

PLAYS WE RECOMMEND

For Schools and Colleges

Twenty-five cents (Postage 2 cents extra)

			Acts	Males	Females	Time
Irish Eden	Comedy	3	8	6	2h	
Kidnapped Freshman	Farce	8	12	4	2½h	
Matrimonial Tiff	Farce	1	2	1	1h	
Little Savage	Comedy	3	4	4	2h	
Lodgers Taken In	"	3	6	4	2½h	
Miss Mosher of Colorado	"	4	5	3	2h	
Miss Neptune	"	2	3	8	1½h	
My Uncle from India	"	4	13	4	2½h	
Never Again	Farce	3	7	5	2h	
New England Folks	Drama	3	8	4	2½h	
Next Door	Comedy	3	5	4	2h	
Oak Farm	Comedy	3	7	4	2½h	
Riddles	"	3	3	3	1¾h	
Rosebrook Farm	"	3	6	9	1¾h	
Stubborn Motor Car	"	3	7	4	2½h	
Too Many Husbands	Farce	2	8	4	2h	
When a Man's Single	Comedy	3	4	4	2h	
Where the Lane Turned	"	4	7	5	2h	
After the Honeymoon	Farce	1	2	3	50m	
Biscuits and Bills	Comedy	1	3	1	1½h	
Chance at Midnight	Drama	1	2	1	25m	
Conquest of Helen	Comedy	1	3	2	1h	
The Coward	Drama	1	5	2	30m	
Sheriff of Tuckahoe	Western Sk.	1	3	1	1h	
Bashful Mr. Bobbs	Comedy	3	4	7	2½h	
Whose Widow	"	1	5	4	50m	
Alice's Blighted Profession	Sketch	1	0	8	50m	
Regular Girls	Entertainment	1	0	any no.	1h	
100% American	Comedy	1	0	15	1½h	
Parlor Patriots	"	1	0	12	1h	
Fads and Fancies	Sketch	1	0	17	1h	
Mr. Loring's Aunts	Comedy	3	0	13	1½h	
My Son Arthur	"	1	2	8	¾h	
Sewing Circle Meets	Entertainment	1	0	10	1¼h	
Every Senior	Morality play	1	0	8	40m	
Bride and Groom	Farce	3	5	5	2½h	
Last Chance	Comedy	2	2	12	1½h	
Bubbles	"	3	4	3	1½h	
Hurricane Wooing	"	3	4	3	1½h	
Peggy's Predicament	"	1	0	5	½h	
Found in a Closet	"	1	1	3	20m	
Slacker (?) for the Cause	Sketch	1	3	1	20m	
Baby Scott	Farce	3	5	4	2½h	
Billy's Bungalow	Comedy	3	5	4	2h	
College Chums	"	3	9	3	2h	
Delegates from Denver	Farce	2	3	10	¾h	
Football Romance	Comedy	4	9	4	2½h	
Held for Postage	Farce	2	4	3	1¼h	
In the Absence of Susan	"	3	4	6	1½h	
Transaction in Stocks	Comedy	1	4	1	45m	
Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party	Entertainment	1	5	11	2h	
Bachelor Maids' Reunion	"	1	2	any no.	1½h	
In the Ferry House	"	1	15	11	1½h	
Rustic Minstrel Show	"	1	any no.	any no.	1½h	
Ye Village Skewl of Long Ago	"	2	any no.	any no.	2h	
Rainbow Kimona	"	2	0	9	1½h	
Rosemary	Comedy	4	0	14	1½h	
Pharaoh's Knob	"	1	1	12	1h	